

The Place-Names of Canisbay, Caithness

WITH MAP

By
JOHN MOWAT, F.S.A.Scot.

COVENTRY

Privately printed for the Viking Society
for Northern Research by
Curtis & Beamish, Ltd.,
50, Hertford Street

1931

Viking Society for Northern Research.

*Founded in 1892, as the Orkney, Shetland and Northern Society,
or Viking Club.*

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, GOWER STREET,
LONDON, W.C.1.

President: Mr. R. FARQUHARSON SHARP, M.A.

Hon. Treasurer: Mr. EDWARD LYNAM, M.R.I.A.

Hon. Secretary: Mr. A. W. JOHNSTON, F.S.A.Scot., 29, ASHBURNHAM
MANSIONS, LONDON, S.W.10.

THE SOCIETY is founded for all interested in the Scandinavian
North and its literature and antiquities.

Subscription and privileges of Members:—

- (a) All Members are entitled to attend, and to introduce friends to, all meetings of the Society.
- (b) Members who pay an Annual Subscription of £1, or a Life Subscription of £20, are entitled to receive gratis the Saga-Book (Proceedings), Year-Book, and Old-Lore Series of Miscellany, and Records relating to the Old Norse Earldom of Orkney, Shetland, Caithness and Sutherland.
- (c) Members who pay an Annual Subscription of 10s. 6d., or a Life Subscription of £10 10s., are entitled to receive gratis either (1) the Saga-Book and Year-Book, or, alternatively, (2) the Old-Lore Series and Year-Book.
- (d) Occasional extra publications are issued at a special reduced price to Members.



LAURISTON CASTLE
LIBRARY ACCESSION

Special Works with Price to Members and to Public.

Translation Series:—Vol. I., Cormac Saga, 6s. 6d. (pub. 7s. 6d.).

Vol. II., Elder Edda (translation), 10s. 6d. (pub. 15s.).

Extra Series:—Vol. I., Birds of Omen in Shetland (out of print).

Vol. II., Ruins of Saga-Time in Iceland, 12s. 6d.

Vol. III., Knut Stjerna's Essays on Beowulf, 15s. (pub. 21s.).

Vol. IV., Poetic Edda in the Light of Archaeology, by Birger Nerman. 6s. (pub. 7s. 6d.).

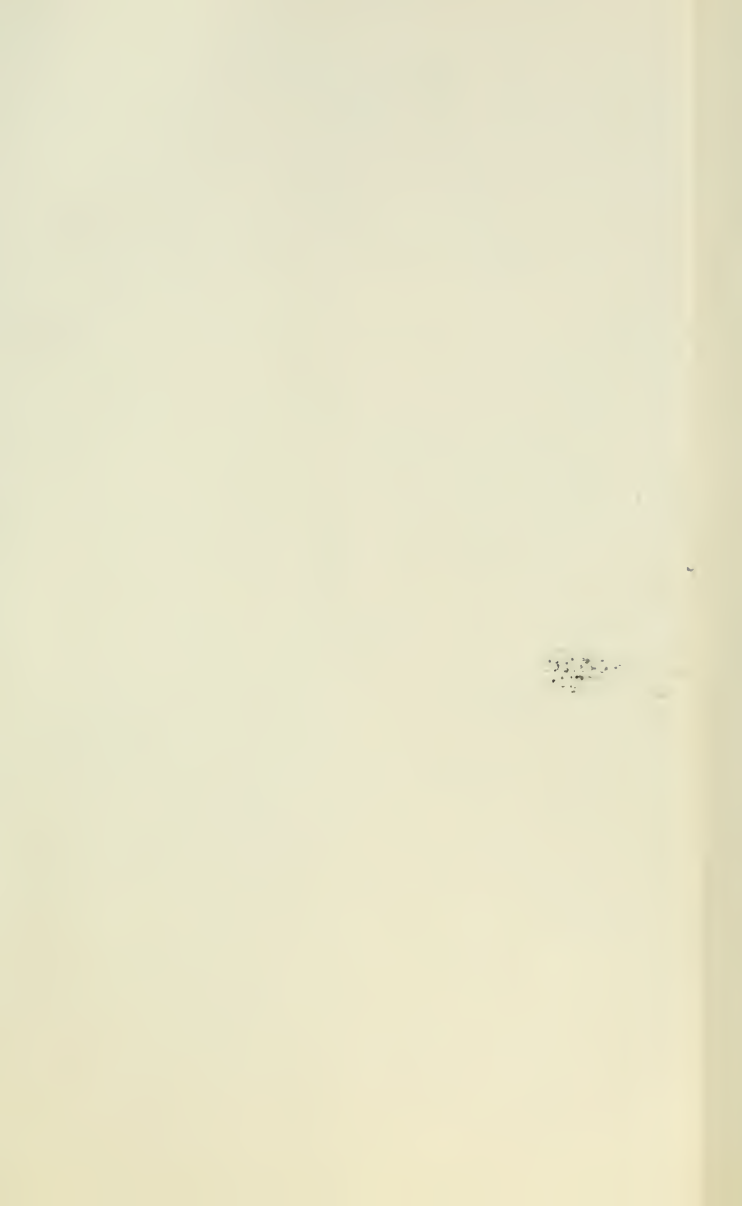
Back Works on sale to members only.

Saga-Books:—Vols. I.—III. out of print, Vols. IV.—X. unbound, at 21s. per vol. to Members only.

Old Lore Series:—Miscellany Vols. I.—VIII., bound, at 12s. 6d. per Vol. to Members only.

Orkney and Shetland Records, Vol. I., bound (one copy remaining), at £2 2s. to Members only.

Caithness and Sutherland Records, Vol. I., bound, at £2 2s. to Members only.



SWELCHIE

wa
herfor
ry
loven

Bhon

Sherries

rvv

Clect

PENTLAND FIRTH

THE BORES OF DUNCANSBY



THE PLACE-NAMES OF CANISBAY, CAITHNESS.

BY JOHN MOWAT.

Introductory Note.

THE place-names of Caithness have not yet received the attention they deserve. The Celts and the Norsemen were at the making of them. The mingling of Celtic and Norse influence in the county would prove an interesting field for the student of Scottish etymology. The late David B. Nicolson made a valuable contribution to the subject in the paper prepared for *The County of Caithness*, published in 1907, but it is more suggestive and illustrative than exhaustive.

In the following list it is proposed to deal only with Canisbay, the parish of John o' Groats, in the north-eastern corner of the county, and the most distinctively Norse. In this parish were some of the earliest Viking settlements. As a basis the Ordnance Survey map has been used, but this has been supplemented from old maps, charters, and local tradition. Of the three hundred names noted, only about sixty appear in Nicolson's list, and only six in J. B. Johnston's *Place-Names of Scotland*.

The writer is indebted to Mr. William Bremner ("Norseman"), Freswick, and to Mr. George Green, The Breck, John O' Groats, for helpful descriptions of local place-names; to the Rev. D. Beaton for derivations and notes marked (D.B.), and for the revision of Gaelic derivations; and particularly to Mr. A. W.

Johnston and Dr. Jón Stefánsson for Old Norse derivations, etc. Mr. D. B. Nicolson's derivations have been revised by Mr. A. W. Johnston, and are marked (N.). Dr. Jón Stefánsson's derivations are marked (J. S.). The author's derivations (A.). All other derivations, which are not marked, and quotations from, and references to, the Sagas are by Mr. A. W. Johnston, whose examples of Shetland names are taken from J. Jakobsen's *Shetlandsøernes Stednavne*, København, 1901.

The derivations given seem to fit the description and situation of the places mentioned. Old maps and records have been searched for varied spellings of the more prominent names. Some modern and commonplace names have been omitted. In the order of arrangement the coast-line has been followed from the south boundary of the parish at Nybster, working north to Duncansby Head, and west to Mey, giving group headlines to various townships.

NOTE.

O.N.	Pronounced as :	Changed in Gaelic to :
Þ, þ	<i>th</i> in <i>thorn</i>	t
Ð, ð	<i>th</i> in <i>the</i>	th, dh } non-
Q, q, O, ø (=ö)	<i>eu</i> in French <i>feu</i>	o } initial

For non-initial interchanges between Old Norse and Gaelic, see Professor W. J. Watson's *Place-names of Ross and Cromarty*, p. lvii.; e.g. O.N. *k* > G. *g*; *kk* > *c*; *g* > *gh*; *gg* > *g*; *t* > *d*, *t*; *tt* > *t*; *p* > *b*; *pp* > *p*; *d*, *dd* > *d*; *f* > *f*, *bh*; etc. Initial *h* frequently develops to *t* in G., being mistaken for *th*, aspirated *t*; e.g., *hólmr* > *tolm* and *tuilm*; *hóll* > *tòll*, etc.

There are, however, examples in Shetland and Norway of O.N. *kk*, *k* > *g*, and in Shetland of *pp* > *b*, *tt* > *d*, etc.

An asterisk (*) indicates the suggested original form.

AUTHORITIES QUOTED.

The Place-names of Ross and Cromarty, by W. J. Watson.

An Etymological Dictionary of the Gaelic Language, and *A Discourse on Ptolemy's Geography of Scotland*, by Alexander Macbain.

Aasen's *Norsk Ordbog*. (Norse, No.)

Fritzner's *Ordbog over det gamle norske Sprog*. (Old Norse, O.N.)

Cleasby's *Icelandic-English Dictionary*, edited by G. Vigfusson. (Icelandic, O.N., Vigfusson.)—A. W. J.

CANISBAY PARISH.

Canisbay Parish probably took its name from the township of that name on the shore of the Pentland Firth and surrounding the pre-Reformation church. The name is first mentioned in an ecclesiastical document of bishop Gilbert, about 1222, in which it is spelled "Canenisbi." The following are later forms:

Cananesbi, 1223, 1245; *Cranesby*, 1275; *Cananby*, 1276; *Canysby*, 1437; *Canesbi*, 1445; *Cannasby*, 1455; and so on until 1620, when Pont's map gives *Conansbay*, and thereafter *Canesby*, *Cannisbay*, in 1744.

There is some difference of opinion as to the derivation. D. B. Nicolson gives it as meaning King's Town, or Village, O.N.* *Konungs-bær*.¹ Pont's Map of 1620 gives *Conansbay*, and Dr. Joseph Anderson, accepting this spelling, thinks the name is derived from an early Celtic chief, Conan, viz., Conan's by, *býr*, *bær*, a farm; just as *Dungalsby* was named after *Dungal*. But we have no mention of *Canisbay* in the Sagas. J. B. Johnston, in *Place-Names of Scotland*, favours "Canon's bi,"² the clergyman's place. The oldest part of the village lay around the present pre-Reformation church built on the site of an even earlier church dedicated to Saint Drostan. The chief foundation connected with that saint was at Deer in Aberdeenshire. The Book of Deer, which contains the records of its history, mentions a family, or Clan Canan, who conferred land on it. Mr. E. W. B. Nicholson, Bodley's Librarian, suggested that one of this clan or family in founding a church in Caithness dedicated it to St. Drostan, and that *Cananesbi* would mean "Canan's Settlement." If this is so, and the probable date the middle of the 12th century, then the village gave its name to the parish.³

¹ In comparison with *Conningsburgh*, in Shetland, one would expect the form: *Conningsby*. A. W. J.

² O.N.* *Kanoka-bær*

³ O.N.* *Kennenda-bær*, with English possessive s: **Kennends-bær*, cleric's farm, seems possible and appropriate seeing that the church is in the township of *Canisbav*. If the adjoining little ness had been G * an *Ceannan*, then possibly O.N. **Kannan-s-bær*; in the same way as it is suggested G. *tiàghad* > O.N. *Þráð-rík*.—A. W. J.

NYBSTER AND AUKINGILL DISTRICT.

NYBSTER. Situated on a rocky place facing the sea. O.N. *Ný-bólstaðr, new farm (N.). In Shetland the only *Ni-* names are NIBERG and NIFJAL. *Ni-* derived by Jakobsen from O.E. *nið*, abyss, a deep, (found in the Edda mystic names “Niðafjöll” and “Niðavellir”); *Niberg* is a rocky place facing the sea, and *Nifjal* a dip or hollow in the land. Hence *Niðbólstaðr, farm on a rocky place facing the sea.

AUCKINGILL or AUKINGILL. Old forms: *Okyngil*, 1361; *Ockyngill*, 1406; *Ouchtingill*, 1549; *Okingill*, 1661; *Oughingill*, 1652; *Okengil*, 1722; O.N. *Hákonar-gil, Hákon’s gil. In Shetland *Hákon* > *Ukin*.

ROCKHILL. A croft standing on a rocky rise.

HALF-WAY-HOUSE. Farmhouse originally built as a wayside inn, half-way between Wick and Canisbay, now called Summerbank House.

SUMMERBANK or NYBSTERHAVEN. The summer landing place for boats. Old name: “Crookmooth,” crooked entrance. O.N. *Krók-minni.

HELL BERRY. A flat rock near Summerbank. O.N. *Hellu-berg, flat rock.

BROUGH HEAD. So named from the remains of a broch on the headland. O.N. *Borgar-hofði.

SGARBACH. “A high cliff promontory of a curved form bearing the name SGARBACH . . . The landward end is crossed by a . . . wall . . . it runs from the edge of a deep ravine on one side to the cliffs on the other.” (*Inventory of Monuments in Caithness*, p. 18). O.N. *Skarð-bakki, crevice-cliff.

MILTON OF AUKINGILL. Site of old mill. O.N. *Mylnu-tún, mill farm or enclosure.

RUFF O’ AUKINGILL. A small projecting reef of rocks. Also *Ruff* of Freswick, *Lang Ruff*, etc. O.N.

*Rófa, an animal's tail applied to a reef. O.N.

*Langa-rófa, long reef. In Shetland *Røv*, and *Røvie Head*. *Rófa-Hákonar-gils.

THE HULLION. A sunken rock on the coast at Aukingill. O.N. *Hóllinn, the hillock. *Hóll* > *hul* in Shetland and *li* > *lyi*, hence *Hullyin*.

POINT OF SORTA. Old name of fisherman's "meeze" for the headland above the *Ruff*, as seen from the north, projecting beyond the nearer land. O.N. *Svarta-nes, black point. "Meeze" is O.N. *mið, one of the landmarks by which a fishing-bank is found, or the term for a fishing-bank itself.

SAMAL'S GEO, or SAMUEL'S GEO. Took its name from a man who lived in the vicinity. It had an older name, "Carl Geo," from a stack in the centre. O.N. *Karl-gjá, old man's geo; *Karl-stakkr, old man's stack.

DIAS GEO. On the south side of *Brough Head* with the remains of a cairn. O.N. *Dys-, or *Dysja-gjá, cairn geo. (J. S.).

TARRY-GEO, or TARRIEGEO. Seaweed gathers here. O.N. *Para-gjá, seaweed geo. (J. S.).

DOUNAL, or DOONAL. O.N. *Dyn-áll, noisy channel. (J. S.).

BLACK SCORE. So named from a black fissure in the cliff. O.N. *Svarta-skora. (J. S.).

KING'S GEO or KINGAN GEO. Near Buchollie Castle. There is a tradition that King James V. landed here on his voyage around Scotland. ? O.N. *Kynginna gjá, the magic, or witchcraft geo; or *Kingunnar-gjá, geo of the brooch, with which cf. Kambs-nes, where Queen Auðr lost her comb.

THE TIPPET or TIPPAD. Near King's Geo. A pyramid-shaped rock. O.N. *Týppit, the tip or apex, from *typpi*, n. a tip.

CASTLE-GEO. The creek or landing-place below Buchollie Castle.

BUCHOLLIE CASTLE. *Boquhillie*, 1549; *Balchollie*, 1554; *Bolquhollie*, 1593; *Buquhollie*, 1598. On 18th century maps: *Buchollies*, and *Bucholly's Castle*. Commonly called *Buchles' Castle*. Also often printed "Old Freswick Castle." The seat of the Mowat family in Caithness, probably so named from their estate in Aberdeenshire, viz., *Balquhollie*. It has been identified, by P. A. Munch, as the Lambaborg of Orkneyinga Saga, the stronghold of Sveinn Asleifarson, the famous viking, who fortified the borg, which was afterwards blockaded by Earl Rognvaldr. Sveinn made his escape by being let down by a rope into the sea and swimming to the nearest break in the cliffs. Mr. A. W. Johnston suggests that the broch at the Ness answers the Saga description of Lambaborg better than Buchollie. Here we have an actual *borg*, with a well-built stone wall at the land end, and the rocks *projecting out seawards*, as described in the Saga, whereas Buchollie is a peninsular rock *lying parallel with the shore*, without any evidence that there had been a borg upon it.

BACKLESS. A croft on a sloping ness or point. O.N. *Bakka-hlíðir, bank slopes.

HILL O' HARLEY. On both sides of the hill-rise the soil is shallow and rocky. O.N. *Harða-hlíð, hard slope. (J. S.).

CRAW HILLOCK. Craw, a sheepfold. Gaelic, *crò*, O.N. *kró*, a sheepfold, O.N. *Kró-hóll, fold hillock.

CROCANS. A piece of marshy grazing moor to the S.W. of Auckingill, locally associated with "crow," rheumatism in cattle. G. *na Crògan, the paws or hands (of pasture among the moor).

TOOAGS. *Too-*, with Gaelic diminutive, *ag*. Two round mounds inland between Freswick and Aukingill. O.N. *Þúfur, mounds, Þúfurnar, the mounds. Cf. the *Tuaks o' Oddi* in Orphir, Orkney.

FRESWICK TOWNSHIP AND DISTRICT.

FRESWICK. The township on Freswick Bay was an early landing place of the Vikings. *Njálssaga*, or *Njála*, relates that about 990: *Hávarðr í Þraðsvík*, *mágr Sigurðar*, was killed, *Hávarðr* was a brother-, father-, or son-in-law of Earl *Sigurðr*, who fell at Clontarf in 1014. In the same *Saga* we next hear of a *gofugr maðr*, a worshipful or good man, *í Þrasvík*, called *Skeggi*, also referred to as *Skeggi bóndi*, who in 1014 lived *í Þrasvík á Katanesi*. The *Orkneyinga Saga* relates that, in 1152, *Sveinn Ásleifarson* was in *Þrasvík á Katanesi*, described as *hús í Þrasvík*, also *bær*, with a *skáli* or *skála hús*, a hall. Close by was a *borg* and *ár-ós*, river mouth. Later forms: *Barony of Freschwyk*, 1549; *Frescewik*, 1554; *Freschewick*, 1565; *Fresyck* (Ortelius), 1570; *Fresick* (Speed), 1610; *Fresik* (Hole), 1610; *Freshwyck* (Morden), 1649; *Fresh-wick* (Gordon), 1653; *Mains of Freshweik* (Retours), 1653; *Fresh Wyk*, 1651-1700, etc. Torfæus' Latin translation of the *Saga* name, in the 17th century, is *TRASVIK*, and *TRASVICH*. O.N. *Þras-vík*, the wick of *Þrasi*, a man's name (J.S.).¹

RUFF OF FRESWICK. The sloping headland or reef running out to the south of Freswick Bay. O.N. **Rófa*, or **Rófa-Þras-víkr*.

¹ *Þras-vík* in *Orkneyinga Saga*, and *Þraðs-vík* in *Njála*, suggest that it was not the wick of a man *Þrasi*, i.e., *Þrasa-vík*. Although the omission of the genitive *a* is quite common, the form *Þrað* is not a Norse word. Possibly, as Gaelic *Innsi Orc* became O.N. *Orkn-eyjar*, similarly, *Þraðs-vík* may be the Norse rendering of a Gaelic place-name. Freswick is a bay with a sand-beach, for which an appropriate Gaelic name would be *Camas na Tràghad*, and so rendered into O.N. as *Þraðs-vík*, the bay of *Þraðr*, possibly taken as a man's name.

Queen Auðr, c. 890, when in *Katanes let gera knörr í skógi á laun*, let build a boat in a wood secretly, probably in *Þras-vík* where there is a wood, and sailed in it to Iceland calling at Orkney and Faroe on the way.

O.N. *Knörr*, gen. *knarrar*, a boat (O.E. *cnearr*, gen. *cnearras*), was borrowed into Irish and Gaelic as *cnarra*, now obsolete. In the *Annals of Loch Cé*, Vol. 1, p. 325, in 1235, occur the words *narrtraighe*, plural *narrtrach*, a boat, evidently made up of (*c*)*narr(a)*, boat, and *träigh*, gen. *träghad*, beach, meaning *beach-boat*, and appears to indicate that the *c* in *cnarra* was silent.—A.W.J.

HORSE GEO. A green slope down to the beach used for grazing horses. O.N. *Hrossa-gjá.

SELLY GEO. O.N. *Sela-gjá, seals' geo. (N.).

LYBERRY. A rock with a sloping back and a deep water face, used as a common fishing place for lythe or saith. O.N. *Lýra-berg. (N.). Icelandic *Lý-berg. O.N. *lýrr*, gen. *lýrs*, pl. *lýrar*, gen. pl. *lýra*, the pollock; Nors. *lyr*; Icelandic *lýr*, gen. *lýs*, in compounds *lý-*. The name *lythe* for the pollock (G. *pollag*), is used in Scotland and parts of Ireland, but no derivation has been suggested; it has been borrowed into G. as *liùth*. In Shetland there are two fishing rocks for pollock, viz. *Løraberg* and *Lørhelja*, O.N. *Lýra-berg and *Lýr-hella. Probably *Lyberry* in Freswick, *Ly-skerry* in Duncansby, and *Liath Skerry* in Canisbay were originally *Lý-*, or *Lýra-*, and the latter one *Liath* intended for *lythe* as a translation of *Lý-*, or *Lýra*. *Liath Skerry* can be G. *Liath-sgeir, grey Skerry.

THE TAA. A toe of land, but more like the *baa* (O.N. *boði*) in Shetland, a rock submerged at high water. O.N. *Tá, a toe. (N.).

SKRITHE. A dip in the rock strata on the south side of Freswick Bay. O.N. *Skriða, a landslip. (N.).

TANG HEAD. Also Tang Head in Mey. O.N. *Tangi. A spit of land running out into the sea. (N.). O.N. *Tanga-höfði.

CLETTS. Two rock pillars, nearly as broad at the top as they are at the base. O.N. *Klettar, rocks. (N.).

RIVES. Low-lying rocks running out into the sea. O.N. *Rif, reefs.

SANNYPEEL. A creek with a sandy bottom in which the fishing boats could lie before hauling up, or after launching. O.N. *Sand-pollr, a little sandy creek. The form *peel* here and in *Tammies Peel*, in Gills, is probably the dial. *peel* for *pool*.

BURN MOUTH. O.N. *Ár-óss*, burn-mouth, in *Þrasvík*, mentioned in *Orkneyinga Saga*.

LODBERRY. A rock at the entrance to *Sannypeel*, once used as a pier for the loading of vessels. In former times the grain from the home-farm was shipped from this place. O.N. *Hlað-berg*, loading rock, the Shetland *Lodberri*. (N.). Cf. O.N. *Hlað-hamarr*, loading rock, from which is derived Gaelic *laimhrig* and *lamraig*, the Shetland *lahamar*, etc., also O.N. *hlein*, rock used as a pier. In Lewis, O.N. *hlað-hamarr* becomes *lathamur* (Watson).

FRESWICK HOUSE. At the mouth of the Burn of Freswick, built by Sir William Sinclair of Freswick, about 1670. Old local name for the farm is "Burnside," in documents, "Burnsyde." Pont's map, 1638, gives "Burnsyde" with Castle.

BURNSYDE, BURNSIDE. Barony of Burnsyde and mill, 1549; *Burnesyde* (Janson), 1700; *Burkside* (Cary), 1805—a misprint. In O.N. **Ár-síða*.

ST. MODDEN'S CHAPEL. Site of pre-Reformation chapel, around which lingered popish rites. Sir William Sinclair built, on the old site, a modern building with vaults which was never used and has been in decay for over a hundred years.

BRAIDRIGS. Originally the rigs belonging to the *tuns* and worked on the runrig system. The rigs were held by tenants alternately, none holding two adjoining rigs. According to this plan the tenants had equal shares of good and bad land. The rigs were separated by a ridge of uncultivated land. O.N. **Breiðu-hryggjar*. In Orkney the ridge separating the rigs was called a *balk*, O.N. *bálkr*.

THE LINKS. The sand dunes along the shore of Freswick Bay. May be from O.N. **Lykkjur*, hedged fields, or **Lykkjurnar*, the hedged fields. (A.). The O.N. for *sand dunes* is *sand-melar*.

THE FITCHES. Reclaimed mossy ground. O.N.

*Fitjarnar, plural of *fit* with article, meadow land on the banks of a river, etc., the Orkney and Shetland *Fitsjes*, *Fidges*, etc.

SHILLING HILLOCK. Near the old mill of Freswick. A shilling-hill, a hill or eminence used for winnowing corn. (E.D.D., s.v. *shill*.).

BLAEBERRYQUOYS. Crofts or farms below the present county road, added to the Mains Farm shortly after 1800. *Blayberin quoys* (Retours), 1653. "Janet Mowat, relic of David Bain, Blaeberry-quoys, December 6th, 1661." See *Commissariat of Caithness*. O.N. *Bláberja-kvíar, blaeberry pens.

THE HEATHER. Local name for several crofts, probably having been reclaimed from the hill pasture. O.N. *Heiðrin, the heath.

EASTER-WALL. An old charter name for a district on the south side of the burn of Freswick, comprising, or adjoining, the district now known as "The Heather." *Astrowell* (Charter), 1653. O.N. *Austrvöllr, east field. (N.).

GILL BURN. O.N. *Gil-á, gill-burn.

TOTAL GILL. O.N. *Töðu-vall(ar)-gil, gill of the in-field.

LITTLE GILL. O.N. *Litla-gil, little gill.

BRAID GILL. O.N. *Breiða-gil, broad gill. Gill o' Brabster. O.N. *Breiða-bólstaðar-gil, or *Gil-Breiða-bústaðar.

WOLF GILL. Said to be where the last wolf was killed in Caithness. O.N. *Úlf-gil.

† THE ELF MIRE. So named as elf-stones (arrow-heads) were supposed to be found there. O.N. *Álf-mýrr.

THE DRUM. The ridge of the burn of Freswick. Gaelic *an Druim, the ridge. (N.).

THE FALL 'E DRUM. The place of a fold for the ingathering of sheep or cattle. Gaelic *fal*, pen, *druim*, ridge. The 'e is all that is left of o' 'e, the Caithness dia-

lectical form of *of the*. *Fal o' 'e Drum* may be a translation of G. *Fål na Droma. (D.B.).

TOFTS. Locally called TAFTS. A group of house- or home-steads. O.N. *Toftir, house sites. Old forms: *Toftes* (Pont), 1638. In Charters *Toftis*. In several 18th century maps, *Tostes*, but probably a slip of transcribers, *s* for *f*. Cf. THURDIS-TOFT in Olrig, *O.N. Þórðar-toft, Thord's toft, (J.S.), and TOFT-KARL in Wick, O.N. *Toft-karl, karl's or servant's toft.

THE HAAS. The haa, *i.e.* hall, the chief farm in a township in Caithness. (E.D.D.). Cf. O.N. *holl*, *hall*, a king's or earl's house, also used as name of a farm in Iceland.

THE HAA, DUNCANSBY, and HAA O' GILLS. O.N. *Gils-hall.

THE SLUGS. A broad swamp about quarter of a mile long, near the N.W. boundary of Freswick arable land. Gaelic *slug*, *sloc*, a miry puddle, a *slough*, which latter is supposed to be derived from the Old Gaelic or Irish. For a possible Norse derivation *cf.* *slage*, *slok*, Shetland *slag*, *slog*, a wet depression in the land.

THE PRIEST'S MIRE. Slightly to the north of the Slugs. Local tradition makes it the place of the murder of a priest in pre-Reformation times. O.N. *Prests-mýrr

WESTER QUOY. A patch of pasture near the southern base of the Warth Hill. O.N. *Vestr-kví, west enclosure.

HAGS. A piece of broken moor touching the boundary between the lands of Mey and Freswick. Scotch *hag*, broken ground, probably connected with O.N. *hogg*, a cut or blow, applied to a ravine or cut-like gap in a hill.

HILL O' THE WARD. A well in the north-west of Freswick. (See below).

THE BIRLERS. An irregular burn flowing, through sloping clay banks, past Wester Quoys. ? O.N. *Bugar-hlíðir, burn-bend slopes, from *bugr*, a river-bend, and *hlíðir*, slopes. Cf. O.Ir. *bir*, *bior*, water (Watson, lxxii, 204) and G. *lorg*, track, Welsh *llyr*, channel, water-course (Macbain, s.v. *lorg*).

GURQUOY. Part of a holding. O.N. *Geira-kví, the quoy of the gore. (J. S.).

EVERLY. *Overley*, in Charter, 1653. O.N. *Efrihlíð, over slope. (N.).

OUTERTOWN. At the outer circle of the township of Freswick. *Owirtye* (Charter), 1549. O.N. *Ytri-tún.

MIRE OF TROWSKERRY. *Ow* in *Trow* pronounced as *ow* in *how*. A mire of hollows and swamps, traditionally associated with trolls or fairies, being in the vicinity of the Warth Hill, the place where the fairies were last seen. In Shetland, O.N. *ker*, a tub, is applied to a swamp, mire and pool, and to a mire with hollows; and in Denmark, *kær* is applied to a swamp, bog and pool. In Norse mythology *troll* and *þurs* were giants, as compared with *álfr* and *huldu-fólk*, fairies, elves. In Shetland O.N. *þurs* > *trus*, hence *Þurs(a)-kera-mýrr > *Trus-kera-mýrr, trolls' hollows' mire. If *trolla* > trows', or *trolls* > trow's, then possibly the original name may have been *Trolla-, or Trolls-kera-mýrr.

HILL O' KIRSHAN. The west-ward ridge of hilly moorland between Freswick and the low-lying districts of Canisbay on the north. O.N. *Kýr-tjarnar-hóll, cow's pool's hill, or *Kýr-tjörn.

WARTH, or WART HILL. The highest eminence in the district. Eastward is the Black Hill (O.N. *Svarta-hóll), so named as from its dark heathery surface. On the top of these ward-hills are usually a heap of stones, the ruins of ancient watch towers or beacons used for signalling purposes. The

kindled fires on the wards could be seen from long distances. O.N. *Varða, a beacon; cf. Icelandic *Vorðufell*, beacon fell, and *Varðberg*.

GYRES. O.N. *Geirar, plural of *geiri*, a gore or strip of out-lying grass in the moorland. (N.).

GYER, or GIAR HILL. Westward of the Warth Hill, has patches of green on the slopes. O.N. *Geira-hóll.

LOCH O' LOMISHON. An inland moorland loch. O.N. *Lóma-tjörn, loch of the ember-goose, *lómr*. (N.).

THE SHONS. A tract of boggy moss. O.N. *Tjarnirnar, the pools.

SHONS OF BRABSTER. O.N. *Breiðabólstaðar-tjarnir.

LINT LOCHIE. A loch so named from the abundance of cotton-grass which whitens the black bog and was at one time gathered and spun. The O.N. name would have been *Fífu-vatn, cotton-grass loch, and the Gaelic Lochan an Lìn.

BLACK LOCHIE. A loch in the black moss. O.N. *Svarta-vatn, black loch. G. *Dubh Lochan.

SHONS, SHUNS, SHEENS. O.N. *Tjarnir, pools. (N.).

DYANS. A marshy piece of moorland stretching from the base of the Warth Hill. O.N. *Dýin, the marshes, from *dý*, pl., marshes, with article and English pl. s. added.

DYSSETTER. O.N. *Dý-setr, the boggy pasture. (N.).

THE BROW, THE BROO. The rise to the north-west of Freswick township. O.N. *Brá, brow. (N.). O.N. *brá*, described by Vigfússon as the *eye-lid*, and by Fritzner as *the fringe of hair on the eye-lid*, and does not appear to be used in place-names. O.N. *brún*, the *eye-brow*, is applied to the brow of a fell or moor, hence *Brúnin, the brow.

THE RED ROW. A row of four cottar houses, probably so named because of their being built of red sandstone.

MIDTOWN, or MIDTON. Local pro. "Mittan." (Perhaps) the middle *tún*. O.N. *Mið-tún, middle en-

closure. (N.). [O.N. *Meðal-tún; cf. *Midland* (in Orkney) < O.N. Meðal-land, (Hákonar Saga).

THE HECKLER. Originally "The Heckler's Well."

A well made in connexion with the lint-spinning industry about 1794, and used for bleaching purposes.

WATT'S WELL. Name of a well. O.N. *Vatns-lind, a spring well. *Vats* (pron. *wats*) is an old gen. of *vatn*, and *vatns* in Shetland > *wats*.

QUOY ANGUS. Locally understood to mean the black quoy from its black mossy soil. Also called "The Gutters." In Orkney a number of *quoy* names end in a personal name, and possibly this may be the quoy of Angus. O.N. *Kví Enguss; G. *Cuidh Aonghais (pronounced *innish*).

QUOY DYKES. The dykes of the quoys between which was the old cattle or cart track or "caa." O.N. *Kvía-díki.

CAA ROAD, and THE CAA. The ancient track passing through the township. Gaelic *an Cadha, the narrow passage, pass. The O.N. term is, *geil*, or *sund*. There are several *Caas* in other parts of the parish.

SONSIQUOY. The quoy at the end of the sands, or links, of Freswick. In 1563, *Sownsaquoy*. It also appears as *Sondisquoy*. ? O.N. *Sands-kví. Cf. O.N. *sund*, *syndi*, applied to a passage or lane, the G. *cadha*. O.N. *Sunds-kví, lane-quoy. At the old Bú of Orphir there was a *Synde-hús*, between which and the grave-yard there was a *sund*, or passage, also called the *Masey gate* (Mass road, O.N. *Messu-gata).

RED HEAD. Red sandstone cliff on the north-west side of Freswick Bay. There is a suggestion that this might be the *Verubium* of Ptolemy,¹ A.D. 150.

¹ Macbain identifies *Verubium* with Noss Head, and derives it from *ver.*, prep., and *ub*=Irish *ubh*, sword-point, meaning "Sword Head." —A. W. J.

O.N. *Rauði-höfði. This may be the *Rauðu-björg* of the *Orkneyinga Saga*, off which a sea battle took place, c. 1045, between earls Þorfinnr and Rögnvaldr; but it is much more likely to have been Dunnet Head. *Rauðu-björg*, red cliffs, has been unaccountably identified as "Rattar Brough"! *brough* = *borg*, broch or castle. *Rattar* is probably Gaelic, *Ràth-t-ar, the place of a *rath*, residence. Cf. *Ràth-t-agan* (Watson, xxxviii., 172).²

FERRAD. A boggy place. O.N. *F'orað*, an impassable place. (N.).

FEETONSQUOY. O.N. *Fítóns-kví, wizard's quoy. (N.).

CLAVEY GREEN. A sloping green break in the cliffs. O.N. *Kleifin-græna.

JENNY HARROW. Name of a well. Probably a contraction of "Jenny Harrow's Well," from the name of a woman who lived in the neighbourhood.

THE BRACK. O.N. *Brekka, a slope, *Brekkan, the slope.

WATRESS. The watery field. O.N. *Vatns-rás, a water course, or a road alongside water. In Shetland, *Vatsaros*, a road alongside water.

SLACK O' E' STACK. A hollow between two hillocks, used at sea as a *meeth* (O.N. *mið*) or landmark. O.N. *Slakki, a hollow in the ground, applied in Orkney to a hollow or depression between two hills in a range, *Slakki-Stakksins.

THE HAVEN. Old natural landing place now replaced by a pier.

CORFF-HOUSE. A house or shed for curing salmon and keeping nets. (Jamieson's *Dict.*). This place is still used for that purpose in a limited way.

² The Rev. D. Beaton points out that Macbain, in his *Place-names of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, pp. 141, 158, refers to the use of "*rât*, apparently for *ràth*, a fortified residence," as a common prefix in place-names confined to Pictland; hence, if this is the *rat* in *Rattar*, then the *-ar* may be the usual extension: G. *Rât-ar, place of raths.

THE POW. A large pool of water left by the tide between high flood and ebb. "The Back o' e' Pow." O.N.

*Pollr, a pool. *Pollrinn, the pool.

SKIRZA, SKIRZA HOUSE and SKIRZA HEAD. Old forms : *Skirssarie* (valued Rent Roll), 1683; *Scourzie Head* (Brown's map), 1730 ?; *Skersarie* (old parochial map); *Scarskerry*, 1812. The endings *-arie* may be either *erg*, *airigh*, a shealing, or *øyrr*, a gravel beach, which latter > *eri* in Shetland. O.N. *Skersu-, or Skars-øyrr, or *-airigh*, the ogress's beach or shealing.

CRAIGWELL. An iron-stone spring at Skirza Head. Cf. "Tobar Chragag," well of the little rock, a holy well in Avoch. See Watson's *Place-names of Ross and Cromarty*, p. 133. Gaelic *Tobar Creige, well of the rock or craig, or well-rock, or *-craig*; *Tobar na Creige, well of the craig.

THE SLATE. Flat rock surface under Skirza Head with outlying rock known as "The Stane o' e' Head." O.N. *Slétta, a flat, or *Sléttan, the flat.

THE SELKIE STANES. A common resort of seals. O.N. *Sela-steinar, seals' stones, or *Sela-steinarnir.

LANG RUFF. A long projecting submerged rock. O.N. *Langa-rófa, long reef.

RUSHIE GEO. O.N. *Hrossa-gjá, horse geo. (J. S.).

HOLE OF THE HEAD. O.N. *Hofða-hola.

EFFIE'S GEO. O.N. *Efju-gjá, muddy geo.

THE NEVS. Rocks north of Effie's Geo. O.N. *Nafirnar (plural with article), the naves, from O.N. *nøf*, nave, hub.

SKIPPIE GEO. O.N. *Skipa-gjá, ships' geo.

HOWBURN HEAD. Half-way between Skirza Head and Duncansbay Head, appears on Thomson's map of Caithness *circa* 1832, attested by several prominent proprietors and Peter Manson, surveyor. *Howburn Point*, on map attached to Henderson's *Caithness*

Agriculture, 1812. Not identified. O.N. *Hallbjarnar- or Hábjarnar-höfði, Hallbjörn's headland. (J. S.).

LANG GEO. O.N. *Langa-gjá, long geo.

STAISH ROCKS. Placed on Black's map to the south of the stacks of Duncansby. O.N. *Steði, a stithy, anvil; applied in Shetland to a skerry of triangular form, pointed at the top and broader below, like an anvil with pointed end. *Steðja-[sker.].

WIFE GEO. Named from a Stack, the centre of which resembles a woman. O.N. *Víf-gjá, woman-geo, probably a *görninga-víf*, witch. *Víf-stakkr, woman-stack.

FAUSE GEO, or FAST GEO, or FASGEO. O.N. *Fasa-gjá the geo of Fasi, a nickname. (J. S.).

SALTSKERRY, or SALSKERRY. Given in Black's map. O.N. *Salt-sker, salt skerry; cf. *Salt-eyrr*, salt beach, in Iceland. Cf. G. Sgeir an t-Salainn, (in Applecross) skerry of the salt, a rock uncovered at low water only (Watson, 216).

CROGDALE. (*Croc-o-dile*, O.S.M.). O.N. *Krókadallr, the winding valley of the Duncansby Burn; name now applied to hill.

THE STACKS OF DUNCANSBY. Locally designated: Muckle Stack, O.N. *Mikli-stakkr, the big stack (high rock in the sea); Peeri Stack, *peerie*, *piri*, derived by Jakobsen from Norse *pirre*, small; and Tom Thoom, O.N. *Þumli, a 'tom thumb,' a nickname, from *Þumall*, a thumb, c'. *Þumal-tá*, the big toe. Collectively O.N. *Stakkarnir, the stacks, *Dungals-bœjar-stakkar, stacks of Duncansby.

FISHGEIL. Sometimes called *Fish Scale*. A large flat reef of rocks partly submerged at high water. There is a channel between the reef and the cliffs large enough for a fishing boat at high water. O.N. *Fiska-geil, fish channel.

THE GIRNS. In this place the cliff slopes gently, and is covered with grass for some distance from the top, in marked contrast with the perpendicular cliffs on either side. It is said to have been a fox lair, when these animals abounded in Caithness. O.N. *Grenin, the foxes' lairs (N.); or O.N. *Gjoggrarnar, the clefts or rifts, from *gjogr*, a cleft or rift; the local name for a fishing place in N.W. Iceland, viz., *Gjogr*, or *á Gjogri*. In Shetland *de Gorn*, the name of a sea rock, derived by Jakobsen from O.N. *Gýgrin, the ogress.

PARTAN GIRNS. A flat shoal jutting out from the beach at The Girns, through which deep channels run, noted for being a good place for fishing lobsters and crabs locally known as *partans* (Gaelic, *partan*, a crab). The shoal probably took its name from the adjoining cliffs, The Girns.

THE STRIDIN MAN. A rock near Fasgeo having the appearance of a striding man. Cf. O.N. *stigandi*, a strider.

DUNCANSBY AND DISTRICT.

DUNCANSBY. Heimskringla relates that earl Þorfinnr hausakljúfr (920-963), married Grelǫð, daughter of Dungaðr (Gaelic *Donnchadh*, Duncan), earl of Caithness, by his wife Gróa, daughter of Þorsteinn rauðr. Njála, c. 991, mentions *Dungalsbær*, or *Duggalsbær*, or *Dungansbær*, and *Dungals-nípa*, or *Dugals-nípa*. Orkneyinga Saga, c. 1034, gives *Dungalsbær* in Katanes; c. 1128, Ólafr Hrólfsson (father of Sveinn Ásleifarson) lived in Gareksey, Orkney, and had another *bú*, house, in *Dungalsbær* in Katanes; 1140, Sveinn Ásleifarson in *Duggalsbær* in Nes; 1145, *Dunga'sbær*. Other forms from charters, rentals and maps are: 1540, *Dungesbey* (Mey Charter); 1610, *Dunisbe* (Hole); 1611, *Duncasbie* (Groat Charter); 1650, *Dungsby* (map); 1653, *Dungisby*

(Gordon); 1674, *Dungansbay* (sasines); 1695, *Dungisby* (Morden); 1697, *Dungesbey* (rental); 1725, *Dungsby* (Moll and Camden). The old spelling in local records is "Dungasby," and is so pronounced by the older inhabitants.

O.N. *Dungals-bœr*, the farm of Dungall, the O.N. rendering of the Gaelic name *Dùghall* (*Dugald*), in its old form *Dubgall*, *i.e.* *dubh gall*, black foreigner or Dane. In Shetland there is a *Dunglegjo*, derived by Jakobsen from **Dungalsgjá*.

DUNCANSBY HEAD. Professor W. J. Watson (in his *History of the Celtic Place-Names in Scotland*, p. 36) agrees with Macbain in his identification of the VIRVEDRUM PR. of Ptolemy as Duncansby Head, meaning "Very Clear (Cape)." P. A. Munch has identified this as *Dungals-nípa*, or *Dugals-nípa*, of Njála, c. 991. O.N. *gnípa*, or *nípa*, a peak (*Vigfússon*), a high steep mountain with overhanging top (*Fritzner*). Other forms: 1560-70, *Dungesbe Prom.* (Italian map of Scotland); 1570, *Dungsby Heade* (Ortelius); 1578, *Dungisbe Prom.* (Leslie); 1599, *Dungysby*, (Kier); 1610. *Dunesbe Head* (Speed); 1638, *Dungsby Head* (Pont's map). In c. 991, earl Sigurðr and Njálssons went from Orkney to Caithness, when he was informed that the Scotch earls Hundi and Melsnatdi (who had killed earl Sigurd's relative, Hávarðr í Þraðsvík) were "a short way off with a great host. Then earl Sigurd turns with his host thither, and the name of that place is Duncansnip (*Dungalsnípa*, or *Dugalsnípa*), beyend which they met. And it came to a great battle between them . . . (having defeated the Skotor they chased them) until they learnt that Malcolm (Melkolfr, the Scots king) was gathering a host together at Duncansby" (*Dungalsbær* or *Duggalsbær* or *Dungansbær*). After this they turned back and went to Stroma (Straumey).

SANNICK. A sandy bay, west of Duncansby Head.
O.N. *Sandvík. (N.).

MAIGIE AND CUTTIECRAIG. Fishing rocks near the bay of Sannick. *Maigie* is a kist-shaped shoal with the rocks sloping seaward, submerged at high water. There is deep water between it and the land. O.N. *Magi, stomach, a stomach-formed rock. In Shetland applied to a geo of that form, *Gjomaga*, **Gjá-magi*. Gaelic *Cutach Chreag; Scotch, Cutty Craig.

FLUTHERAN. A long sharp-pointed skerry, that is only submerged at high water with spring tides, and surrounded with water at half tide. O.N. *Flœðrin sker, the high water (covered) skerry. In western Iceland *flæðr* is used instead of *flóð*, high-tide, and *flæði-sker* and *flæðar-sker* is applied to a skerry which is submerged at high-tide; also *flæðar-urð*, rocks reached by high water.

FLISS, or FLESS. A flat skerry in the bay of Sannick submerged at high water. O.N. *Fles, a flat skerry.

GIBSCRAIG. A high stack near Duncansby Head, which from its leaning appearance is likely to topple over. Viewed from the land it appears to be leaning outwards towards the sea, and viewed from the sea it appears to be leaning inwards towards the land. Hence the old local rhyme:—

“ If Gibscraig faa's ta 'e lan',
Dungasby 'ill sink for sin.
If Gibscraig faa's till 'e sea,
Dungasby hid spared will be.”

? for *sin* = O.N. *fyrir sinn*, before it. For *Gib*, cf. Gaelic *gob*, a beak, hill.

SHINSLAVE. The valley north of the Head of Crogo-dale, a grassy slope with perpendicular cliffs on either side, with a footpath winding down to the beach and a small burn running down the slope. O.N. *Tjarnar-kleif, tarn's cliff, with English genitive *s* for O.N. *ar*.

- HUMLIE'S HOLE. A cave in the face of Duncansby Head, probably caused by the action of the waves wearing away the lower strata of rocks. Cf. Icelandic *hömul-grýti*, earth-fast stones, and N. *humul*, stones, especially small round stones.
- LANG GEO O' SLATES. A geo at Duncansby Head. O.N. *Langa-gjá, long geo. *Sléttur, flats. O.N. *Langa-gjá-slettna, long geo of flats.
- THE KNEE. A pierced rock at the point of Duncansby Head. O.N. *Kné, knee.
- THE BOCHT, or BUCHT. A place where sheep were gathered for shearing. Several bights at the sea-side were used for this purpose, such as this one at Duncansby Head and the Bocht o' Mey. Scotch, *bught*, sheep-fold.
- QUINICLAVE. The place of an old water mill in a valley, north of Shinsclave, where a footpath also leads down to the beach and a burn falls over the cliff. O.N. *Kvernar-kleif, quern cliff.
- THE BEIL, or BEILD OF DUNCANSBY. A hollow where cattle or sheep from the common pasture were collected and *beilded* or folded at night. Most townships had a *beild*. Cf. Gaelic *Buaile, a fold, pen; or *Buaill, place for resting and milking (in Lewis); cf. O.N. *ból*, a pen, *bæla fé*, to pen sheep for the night. In Orkney the farmers had to take their turn to *bæla* the cattle in the common *ból* or pen.
- FAAL OF THE BEIL. A fold; at one time a turf-walled enclosure for sheep, but now only a green square patch in the heath. ? Gaelic *Fàl na buaile, dike of the fold. The Rev. D. Beaton suggests that *Beil* may be Scotch *bell*, top of a slope, or more likely, *beil*; *beild*, shelter. See foregoing.
- BAXTER ROCK. To the south of Duncansby Head, shown on the Caithness section of Black's map of Scotland. It is a sunken shoal, a ridge or rock still below the surface at low tide. A typical *blind-sker*



over which the *bōði*, breaker, 'bodes' the hidden or blind skerry; *bōði* is now applied to the rock itself. O.N. **Bak stóra*, big ridge.

KNAPSTER. A stony ridge covered with heathery braes. O.N. **Knapp-staðr*, hill-top place.

THIRL DOOR. An opening through a small promontory south of Duncansby Head. O.E. **Thyrel*, opening. (A.). Cf. Icelandic *lyrill*, (1) a whisk or stick for whipping milk; (2) Shetland *tirl*, the upright axle of the horizontal water-wheel, from which two stacks and a geo are named, the latter from its churning water; (3) the Faroese churn and butter-sticks; (4) name of a farm in Iceland subject to whirling gusts. In the present case it may have been applied to the outer support or pillar of the opening, or to the churning surf washed through the opening.

GEEDIKETTLE. A curious wide and deep cauldron-shaped depression on the edge of the cliffs near the Stacks of Duncansby. O.N. **Gjótu-ketill*, from *gjóta*, a long depression or hollow, which occurs in a Shetland place-name, *de Gjudas*, and *ketill*, a cauldron. The English "kettle" may be a tautology.

KILL O' FLUX. Right opposite the Big Stack. In this cliff there is a gentle bend projecting towards the Stack, and deep channels run between the cliff and the Stack, in one of which there is room for a small rowing boat. O.N. **Flugs-kíll*, channel of the precipice, *flug*, n., a precipice, and *kíll*, an inlet or canal, or **Kíll-Flugs*.

THE OSS. The mouth of a burn. O.N. **Óss*, burn-mouth (from which is derived Gaelic *òs*); or **Óssinn*, the burn-mouth. G. **an Òs*.

THE GLOOP. A cave with an opening to the surface at its inner end. O.N. **Gloppa*, **Gluppa*, or **Gloppan*, the gloop.

LYSKERRY. A flat sloping rock near the Gloop. Icelandic *Lý-skær; see *Lyberry* in Freswick.

JOHN O' GROAT'S HOUSE. So called after John de Groat of traditional fame. Also the Ferry-house of John o' Groat. Now the popular postal name for the older name of Duncansby. Bryce's map, 1744, gives *John o' Groats*; Bowles, 1791, *Johny Grotts*; Cary, 1805, *Johnny Groats House*; Thos. Brown, 18—, *John o' Groats House*; Thomson, 1832, ditto.

PENTLAND FIRTH. The Sagas give Pettlands-fjörðr, Pictland's Fiirth; 1403, *Mare Petlandicum*; Speed, 1610, *Pinthland Firth*. Called *Caol Arcach* by the Gaelic-speaking people of Caithness and Sutherland, i.e., Firth of Orkney; the Gaelic name for Orkney being *Arcu*. (*Proceeds. S.A.Scot.*, 1908, p. 87).

THE SOON. The sound between Stroma and the mainland. Ortelius map, 1570. O.N. *Sund.

NIS, or NESS OF DUNCANSBY. O.N. *Nes, a point or headland. (N.).

BRAID EBB. A level part of the beach seen at low water east of the Ness. O.N. *Breiða-fjara.

BLEGO. A small geo running into a shelly beach. At the outer entrance is a half submerged flat shoal. On one side of the geo are large boulders of blue lava or molten rock. O.N. *Blá-gjá, blue geo.

IRONCRAIG. Volcanic rocks of ironstone near the Ness. G. *Creag an Iaruinn, or *Creag Iarnaidh.

ROBBIE'S HAVEN. A landing place for small boats west of the Ness.

THE EASTIN. The east end. ? O.N. *Austr-endi.

THE BRECK. A piece of uncultivated land used as common pasture. O.N. *Brekka. (J. S.).

LINNIEQUOY. There are two places in John o' Groat's which are called by this name. Both have been level ground covered with heather and lie close

beside a burn. In one part of the district a piece of ground is called *The Quoy*, and right across a burn is *Linniequoy*, a level piece of ground covered with heather. A ridge of braes at the top of this is known as *Broos o' Linniequoy*. O.N. *Lyng-kví, heather quoy, or *Lyng-á(r)-kví, heath burn quoy. *Lyng-kvía-brýnn, *brýnn* is plural of *brún*, brow of a hill.

GLITTERIEQUOY. A level bit of ground in the centre of the township. O.N. *Glitrandi Kví, glittering quoy.

PLASHMIRE. A wet marshy place near Stemster.

BURN OF LYNEGAR. A small burn north of the Beil of Duncansby. O.N. *Lyng-garðs-á, heather-farm's burn.

LEENS and LEEN BURN. Pasture land with burn in centre. *Leens* is the Scotch for low-lying land, e.g. the *Leens* at Loch of Stemster, in the parish of Bower (D.B.). Cf. G. *lian*, *lèan*, *lèana*, swampy plain, meadow, lea, *na lèanan*, the leens.

BOGSDALE. G. *Dal a' Bhuig.

BARQUOY. ? O.N. *Býjár-kví, farm quoy; or O.N. *Barkar-kví, bark quoy, from O.N. *bǫrkr*, applied to root of tormentil in Faroe; also a man's name.

BRUNTLAND. English : brunt = burnt.

RUTHERLAND. ? O.N. *Rjóðr or Ruðr, a clearance (of wood or heather), with English *land* added; otherwise *Ruð-land, Ruðr-land.

SWARTIGILL. The black gill. O.N. *Svarta-gil. (N.).

THE TARNIES. Small lochs in marshy moorland. O.N. *Tjarnirnar, the tarns.

LADY'S KIRK. The remains of an old Roman Catholic chapel, a short distance east of John o' Groat's House, dedicated to the Virgin.

KNOCKIN STANE. A rock, east of John o' Groats, which at one time had a basin-shaped cavity in which the

people used to *hummel* the awns from their bere, or barley. So called from its resemblance to a *knocking stone*, a stone bowl in which corn was knocked with a wooden mallet to remove the awns.

WINNIN HILL. A place where, in olden times, the corn was winnowed.

GEATS HOLE. A small geo running into a sandy beach, where refuse was thrown. At the outer entrance are large boulders, and in the centre a circular pool often containing sea-weed. The Knockin Stane forms one side of Geats Hole. O.N. *Geitis-hola, hole of Geitir, giant, or a man's name.

FERRY HAVEN. Now the pier at John o' Groat's, at one time the haven from which the ferry-boat left for Orkney.

THE KNICKELS. Two shoals, one at each side of the entrance to the Ferry Haven. The top of each shoal is round or clew-like in appearance, and both are submerged at half tide. There are deep channels around both the Knickels. O.N. *knykill*, *m.*, and *hnykill*, *m.*, are both explained by Fritzner as a swelling, node; the former is explained by Jakobsen also as a rock, cliff, projecting rock. Vigfússon gives *hnykill* only, and as a *clew* of yarn, metaph., a *clew-like* thing. O.N. *Hnyklarnir.

HAMMERS. The old name was *Haimers*. The name at one period was applied to a jib-shaped piece of ground near the beach, and also to a flat skerry jutting out into the sea. A narrow channel runs through the shoal. The beach is sand, and a small burn at one time flowed through the corner of land which was known as *Haimers* or *Hammers*. It is situated within a hundred yards of Ferry Haven. O.N. *Hamrar, pl. rocks. (N.).

JUBIGILL. *Wester* and *Easter Jubigill*, small ravines east of John o' Groat's. O.N. *Djúpa-gil, the deep gill. (N.).

HANG. A small bay. There are no overhanging rocks or waterfall, to suggest O.N. *hangandi*. At the base of the surrounding cliffs there is a grass flat called "Ha' Green," about twenty-five yards wide and four feet above high-water level, suitable for a fold. ? G. *an Fhang (pronounced *ang*), the fold; or G. *Buaile-, or *Faich-Theangaidh, fold, or green of the point, *an Teanga (see next below). "Ha' Green" takes its name from the adjoining Ha' of Duncansby.

POINT O' HANG. A reef of rocks below the mill of John o' Groat's.

FULLIGEO. Often full of rotten seaweed. O.N. *Fúlagjá, foul geo.

STOBIE'S HOLE. A cave near Scarfiskerry Point frequented by tinkers. Cf. O.N. *stobbi*, *stubbi*, *stubbr*, a stub, stump or block; also a nickname. *Stubba-hola.

SEATER. In Pont's map, 1638, *Setre*. O.N. *setr*, a residence, seat, *sætr*, mountain pasture. (N.).

STEMSTER. In 1674, *Stembuster* (Groat charter); 1683 (Valued Rent Roll), STAIMSTER; 1768, *Stempster*. A farm-steading near John o' Groat's. There is a green mound (divided from the stead by a deep gully, through which a burn runs) said to cover the ruins of an ancient keep or stronghold belonging to one of the earls of Orkney who kept a governor residing there. The *Orkneyinga Saga* states that Ólafr Hrólfsson (father of Sveinn Asleifarson) had the *yfirsókn*, wardship of Dungalsbær, in 1135. A *stein-kastali* is mentioned in Orkney in 1148, as an unusual building compared with the usual wooden houses. O.N. *Stein-bústaðr. The Rev. D. Beaton states that all the places called Stemster in Caithness, known to him, occur where there are or were standing stones. The name would, therefore,

be *Steins-bústaðr, 'farm of the standing stones,' like Steins-nes, now Stennes in Orkney.

HUNA. A crofting township two miles west from John o' Groat's, situated at the foot of the Mool Hill. Bordered on the west side by the burn of Huna, and on the east by the Ness of Huna, a small crest-like peninsula which terminates in a beach. On Huna links are the remains of a Picts' village and several burial cairns. It is supposed to be the burial place of earl Hloðver, who, the saga states, was buried at Hofn in Katanes, about 975. The haven of Huna is a sandy beach. O.N. *hofn* > *ham* in Orkney and Shetland, and there is a *Ham* in Dunnet adjoining an earth-house. Myrkkol, now Murkle, where Hloðver's brother, earl Arnfinnr, lived, is much nearer Ham than Huna. In Caithness charter, 1574, *Hwnaye*; 1777, *Houna*. Cf. *Huney* in Shetland, O.N. *Húna-ey*, the island of a man Húni. O.N. *Húna-á, the burn of Húni. Cosmo Innes in *Orig. Par. Scot.* suggested, "Huna appears to be the Hofn where earl Hlodver was buried"—a suggestion which apparently arose from an impossible derivation.

SCARFSKERRY POINT. East of Huna, a common resting place for cormorants. O.N. *Skarfa-sker.

MOOL HILL. Between Huna and John o' Groat's. From the east end of the Pentland Firth it looks like a promontory which would indicate a derivation from O.N. *múli*, an animal's snout, in place-names also meaning a rounded hill especially on a promontory. (A.).

TRESDALE. A low lying stretch of ground which might be termed a valley, strath or dale. Near Tresdale is Trooskerry, traditionally known as a place where the trolls held high revelry. ? O.N. *Þurs-dalr > Trusdale.

CANISBAY TOWNSHIP AND DISTRICT.

CANISBAY. The township on the shore of the Pentland Firth. For derivation see notes under Canisbay Parish.

QUOYS. Quoys of Canisbay. O.N. *Kvíar, enclosures or pens. (N.).

NISS, or NESS OF QUOYS. The point opposite the farm of Quoys. O.N. *Nes, or *Kvíá-nes.

LYREQUOY WELL. Below Kirkstyle. O.N. *Leir-kví, clay quoy. (N.).

OLD DISTILLERY WELL. The distillery has long since been out of existence.

KIRKSTYLE. The farm beside the church.

KIRK OF CANISBAY. Early site dedicated to St. Drostan.

CLAY POTTS. West of Canisbay, given in the map of the soil of Caithness attached to Henderson's *Caithness Agriculture*, 1812.

WEST CANISBAY HOUSE.

SCAABANK. A small sandy channel below Canisbay church. Several large boulders form one side. Often full of sea-weed. O.N. *Skagi, a low ness, probably the name of the adjoining ness, hence *Skaga-bakki, the bank of the ness.

SLAEAL, also SLAYEL. A narrow inlet quite close to Scaabank always covered with green slimy weed. O.N. *Slý-áll, slimy seaweed channel.

SUEMEYL. Given in Cary's map, 1805, lying to west of Canisbay. Not identified.

WARSE. There is a burn-mouth below Warse. Old forms: *Warrs*, *Warss*, *Warres*; *Warris*, 1574. One of the earliest possessions of the Groats. O.N. *Ár-óss, burn-mouth. In Shetland *Woros*, etc.

HAA O' WARSE. The ancient hall of the Groats of Warse.

SMIDDYS or SMYDDIES. A place-name associated with Warse, in Mey charters, 1574, also part of the Groat

lands. O.N. *Smiðjur, smithies. Shetland names: *Smidja(s)*, de *Smis*, de *Smitaps*, i.e. O.N. *smiðju-totir.

FOWLTAIL or FOULTAIL. Locally called *Fooltel*, adjacent to Warse, also Groat lands.

PYPER'S CROFT. Associated with Warse, Smyddies and Foultail, in old charters of the Groats. Location doubtful. There was a family of pipers in a neighbouring croft within the last century, but this name goes back to the 16th century. There was a traditional Pyper's Croft near the Haa of Duncansby and another adjacent to Wick Burgh.

GILLS AND MEY.

GILLS, GILLS BAY, GILLS HAVEN, UPPER and LOWER GILLS. O.N. *GIL, n. sing. and pl., a small narrow glen. (N.).

HAA O' GILLS. The hall or chief house, the residence of the laird.

SOE-SKERRY. O.N. *Sjó-skær, sea skerry.

THOMAS PEELS ROUGH. Locally called "Tammies Peel." O.N. *Þambar-polls-hróf, boat-shed of Þomb's pool or creek; *rough*, may also be O.N. *rófa*, applied to a reef or point. O.N. þomb, gen. þambar, (1) a bow-string, and so applied to place-names, probably meaning out-stretched. Iceland, Þambar-vellir, -dalr; Shetland, *Tommalands*, etc.; (2) a nickname, now "Tomma." This name probably means Þomb's creek's boat-shed. Þambar-polls-hróf > *Tamma* + *s peel's hróf*, and the creek itself would be *Þambar-pollr, "Tammies Peel."

DEUBIE GILL. *Bigill*, 1662; *Jubigill*, 1685. O.N. *Djúpa-gil, deep glen. (N.).

SHEAVIE GILLS. Unlevel, up and down ground. O.N. þýfi, n., uneven ground, cf. þýfi-teigr, a rough paddock, hence O.N. *Þýfi-gil, pl. uneven gills. As in Shetland, þý > *shu*.

PIRLY CRAIG. ? Gaelic *Pùirleag-chraig, craig-crest, or *Pùirleag na Creige, crest of the craig.

KEALY CRAIGS. Gaelic, *Creagan na Caillich, the old woman's, or nun's, crags.

HEAD OF CREES. The point at the east side of Scotland Haven. On the opposite side is St. John's Point, and near this the site of the old pre-Reformation chapel of St. John. Cf. Icelandic place-name *Krýsu-vík* = *Kross-vík*, holy-rood-wick. ? O.N. *Krýsu-Höfði, or *Kross-Höfði.

MEY. East and West Mey. Old forms: *Mai*, Matthew of Paris map, 1250; *May* in Ortelius, 1570; P. Kerr, 1599; Pont, 1638; Gordon, 1653; Mordon, 1695. J. B. Johnston says *Mey* is one of the forms of Gaelic *Magh*, a field or plain. In Watson's *Place-Names of Ross*, etc., p. 105, *Moy*, in Urray, is derived from Gaelic *à mhuaigh*, locative case of *magh*, a plain. In Shetland *Mawik*, *Maywick*, is derived by Jakobsen from Gaelic *magh*, like all the other Scots place-names *May*.

SCOTLAND HAVEN. (*Scotland's Haven*, O.S.M.). *Scotland Haven*, 1662, 1685. It is also called "Orkney Ferry" in the maps of the N.S.A., 1840, and Henderson's *Caithness Agriculture*, 1812; but the old ferry to Orkney was from Duncansby.¹

SCOOR BERRY. O.N. *Skuru-berg, score rock.

¹ That this haven was called "Scotland Haven" (e.g. because it was one of the nearest landing places in Scotland from Orkney), seems unlikely; and, as the haven is surrounded by uncultivated land which was exempt from *skatt*; it cannot be "Scatland," i.e. *Skattland*. On the east side of the haven is the head of Crees (?Krysu-höfði, Holy-rood Head), and on the west, St. John's Point with the site of a chapel in a remarkable enclosure of some ten acres at the outer extremity of the point, formed by a deep trench fifty feet broad cut right across the promontory, with a rampart about ten feet high along the outer side of the trench. With this enclosure cf. G. *lann*, locative *lainn*, an enclosure, W. *llan*, O.W. *lann*, area, church; and G. *sgot*, a plot of ground, a small detached croft; or G. *sgod* (derived from O.N. *skaut*), the corner of a square sheet, applicable to the triangular shape of the enclosure. G.*Sgot-, or *Sgod-lainn. A. W. J.

- BLAE GEO. O.N. *Blá-gjá, blue geo.
- FA'EN CRAIG. A geo with overhanging rocks and falling stones.
- BALE GEO. O.N. *BALA-GJÁ, geo of the grassy bank.
- RED HEAD. O.N. *Rauði-höfði.
- BARBERRY HEAD. O.N. *Bar-berg höfði, needle-rock head.
- WINDY GEO. O.N. *Vind-gjá.
- BOAT GEO. O.N. *Bát-gjá, boat geo.
- MALLIE GEO. O.N. *Mala-gjá, pebble-beach geo.
G. *Mal, or Mol a' Geòdha, pebble beach of the geo.
- BLACKENBERRY. A black point of rock with one deep water face. ? O.N. *Svarta-, or Blakka-berg.
- ROCKS o' GIRSAL. Also called Girsal. A stack or clett. O.N. Gýgjar-súla, witch's pillar.
- FAS BERRY. O.N. *Fasa-berg, the rock of Fasi.
- LONG GEO. O.N. *Langa-gjá.
- BRAES o' GERSTAL. Grassy braes sloping down to a sandy beach. O.N. *Gerðis-stöðull, enclosure for milking cows. *Stöðull* > *stól* in Shetland.
- MEALIN TANG. An oval-shaped boulder. G. *Meall na Teanga, lump of the point.
- FULLIGEO. Full of rotten sea-weed. See *Fulligeo*, Duncansby.
- LIATH SKERRY. A fishing-place for lythe. See *Lyberry*, Freswick.
- MEN o' MEY. A tidal current, or bore, at the west entrance of the Pentland Firth, commonly called "The Men of Mey," or "The Merry Men of Mey."
- ST. JOHN'S POINT. Named after an old chapel in the neighbourhood dedicated to St. John. See *next below*.
- CHAPEL OF ST. ARDOCH. This chapel is mentioned in Canisbay Kirk Session Register. Ardoch is probably Gaelic *ardach*, eminence, (St. John's Point) as seen from the sea. Why it received "St." is a

- problem, unless the natives transferred it from St. John to the place-name which was probably much older than St. John's Point. (D.B.).
- HUNSPOW. Name of a farm. O.N. *Hunds-pollr, dog's pool.
- BARROGIL CASTLE. Originally called Castle of Mey, or House of Mey. Near by is the site of an ancient burial cairn or barrow. The gill would come down the burnside to Fulligeo, hence there would be the barrow and gill adjoining. O.N. *Borgar-gil, the gill of the borg.
- BERRIEDALE ARMS. Opened when the shipment of flagstones was taking place at Philips Harbour. O.N. *Berg-dalr, rocky ground dale. In Shetland O.N. *berg* > *berri*.
- PHILIPS HARBOUR. Named after Louisa Philips, daughter of Sir George Philips and wife of James 14th earl of Caithness. Formerly "Wester Haven."
- WESTER HAVEN. The haven of Mey. There is also an Easter Haven.
- TROWS GEO. O.N. *Þursa-gjá, trolls geo; in Shetland Trussegeo, in which *trus* is the metathesis of *turs*; or O.N. Tros-gjá, geo of refuse, cf. *Trosvik* in Shetland.
- TANG HEAD. O.N. *Tanga-höfði; *tangi*, a spit of land running out into the sea. (N.).
- REDCASTLE. A geo with red sandstone cliffs and a block of red sandstone detached from the cliff. There is a tradition that there was a building at the inner end of the geo which collapsed and fell during a night of festivity held inside. O.N. *Rauði Kastali; G. *Caisteal ruadh.
- HARROW. Near Barrogil Castle. Probably O.N. *Högrgr, a heathen place of worship. (J.S.). Cf. Gaelic, *Aroch, a hamlet or dwelling.
- SCORRIE MOSS. O.N. *Skorra-mosi, the pie (birá) moss.

EBBS GEO. O.N. *Fjǫru-gjá.

JUMPAG. A hillock facing the sea. Cf. G. *tiomþan*, a one-sided *tom*, or *toman*, diminutive of *tom*, a hillock. (Watson, lxxv.).

WATTY'S CRAIG. O.N. *Vatns-(craig), water craig.

HASTY LOUP. A detached rock with a space of water between it and the shore. There are several "loups" along the coast. O.N. *Hesta-hlaup, horse leap. This rock, like many others, may have been called 'The Horse of' (the name of the adjoining place).

GREEN GEO. O.N. *Græna-gjá.

ROTTEN GEO. ?O.N. *Hrotna-gjá, geo of ember geese.

TREE GEO. O.N. *Tré-gjá, driftwood geo.

GEO SETTER. O.N. *Gjá-sætr.

GEO O' BEDSDALE O.N. *Gjá-beitis-dals, geo of the pasturedale. But cf. Norse *bedja*, a fold for animals, O.N. **beðja*; **Beðjar*-, or **Beðja-dalr*, dale of the fold or folds, with English possessive *s* for O.N. *a* or *ar*.

HOW SKERRY. A rocky point on the foreshore in a line northwards from an old mound. O.N. *Haugsker, mound's skerry.

BLACK GEO. O.N. *Svarta-gjá.

PEARL GEO. ?N. *Perlu-gjá, pearl geo. Cf. *Pirly Craig* in Gills.

BRABSTER, SLICKLY AND INLAND DISTRICT.

BRABSTER. O.N. *Breiðabólstaðr, or Breiðabústaðr, broad farm.

BRABSTERMIRE. O.N. *Breiðabólstaðar-mýrr, broad-farm mire.

CRAIGHILL. A low hill in Brabster district with a craig at one side.

BATTENS O' BRABSTER. O.N. *Beitin, or Beitinar, the pastures, from *beit*, f., or *beiti*, n. *Beitin-Breiðabústaðar.

SHONS OF BRABSTER. O.N. *Tjarnir Breiðabústaðar, the tarns of B.

THOMSON'S FIELD. Between Gills and Brabster.

STROUPSTER. *Stroubuster*, 1574. O.N. *Stór-bústaðr, the big farm, *stór* > *stró*.

FIELDS OF BRABSTER. There were 6 tenants in 1697 (Rental). O.N. *Foldir Breiðabústaðar, the grass fields of B. Cf. *Foldir* in Iceland and Shetland.

SCHOOLERY. *Skilarie*, 1664; *Schoolary*, *Scoullary* (rental), 1697. O.N. *Skúla-erg, the shealing of Skúli. Earl Skúli was killed in battle *i Dqlum á Katanesi* c. 975.

SLICKLY. *Slickly*, *Sleiklie* (rental), 1697. O.N. *Slakka-hlið, the slope of the *slakki*, a sinking in the ground, or hill-slope.

TOFTTRANALD. O.N. *Toft-Rognvalds, Ronald's toft.

STONEYHILL. O.N. *Stein-hóll, -hváll, -hvoll, stone hill.

RIGIFA, HILL OF RIGIFA. *Rigifa*, 1662; *Rogifa*, 1685. O.N. *Hryggjar-fjall, ridge hill.

NISSETTER. O.N. *Neðsta-setr, lowest setr, which, in Shetland > *Nestasettar* > *Nisseter*.

PHILIPS MAINS. Originally *Nissetter*. Renamed after Louisa Philips, wife of the 14th earl of Caithness.

GROTTESTOFT MOSS. If *Grott* is not a personal name, then ? O.N. *Grjótunnar-toftar-mosi, the moss or moorland of the giant's toft. Or O.N. *grjót*, n., stones, stony ground, in compounds *grjót*-, *Grjót-toftar-mosi, *Grjóts-toftar-mosi.

CRACKERSFIELD. Green fields in the moor between Brabster and Mey, at one time reclaimed into seven crofts, but now back to sheep-grazing. It is not associated in any way with the crow, O.N. *kráki*, and cannot, therefore, be *kráka-fold*.¹

¹ Cf. O.N. *kraki*, a, m. a palisade, pale or stake, and the nickname for a tall thin man. *Kraka-fold, or -völlr, field of stakes. The only field of stakes in Caithness, mentioned in the Saga, is the *haslaðr völlr* in *Skíða-mýrr*. Circa 976. earl Ljótr fought earl Magbjóðr at *Skíða-mýrr*; and c. 980, *Finnleikr Skota-jarl haslaði Sigurði vøll á Skíða-mýri*: *Finnleik*

HOLLAND MEY, or MAIK. *Hole o' Mey* (Pont), 1638; *Holland Mai*, 1662. Was at one time large commons, but now a farm. "Hollands," once a local name for "commons." The land is raised but not high in the sense of a hill. There is a ruin of an old tower in one field. Mey, or Maik, G. *magh*, a plain, O.Ir. *mag*. *Holland* may be O.N. *háland*, high land, which would be applicable to the hill commons, or *hallandi*, a slope, declivity.

STROMA.

STROMA. O.N. *Straumey*, stream island, *Orkneyinga Saga*; *Stroem Oy* (Pont), 1638; *Stromay* (Sasine), 1681.

CULLIEGEO. O.N. **Kolla-gjá*, knoll geo.

HIMRAL. O.N. **Humar-áll*, lobster channel. (N.).

LARGUOY. O.N. **Leir-kví*, clay quoy. (N.).

OVERTOWN. O.N. **Øfra-tún*.

NETHERTOWN. *Neithertoun*, *Nethirtown*, 1681; *Neather-ton*, 1719. O.N. **Neðra-tún*, lower *tún*. (N.). In a charter of 1687 part of it was bounded by the dyke of Tofts on the S., the sea on the E. and N., and the burn of Ramigo on the W. Ramigo, O.N. **Hrafna-gjá* (pronounced *ramna*), ravens' geo.

TREESGEO. O.N. **Tré-gjá*, driftwood geo: usually *tré-gjá*, but possibly **Trjá-gjá*, trees' geo.

SWELKIE. A dangerous tidal whirlpool off the point of Stroma. O.N. *Svelgr*, mentioned in *Orkneyinga* and *Hákonar sagas*. The myth about the magic quern, *Grotti*, which grinds salt to make the sea salt, at the bottom of this *Svelgr*, is too well known to be repeated here. See *Saga-Book*, Vol. VII., and *Old-Lore Miscellany*, Vol. III., and *Snorra Edda*.

staked out a pitched battle-field for Sigurd at *Skiða-mýrr*. O.N. *hasla* (- -) *voll*, to stake out (for someone) a field with four hazel stakes for a pitched battle. Earl Sigurd's famous *merki*, banner, bearing the magic *hráfn*, or *hrákr*, was first unfurled here. *Skiða-mýrr* has been unaccountably identified as Skitten! It may be derived from *skíði*, a, m., a man's name. Also cf. G.**Cròc-ar*, place of branching (pastures). A. W. J.

- PUNNIE. A house in the rock once used for smuggling, and still intact. O.E. *Pund, with dim. *ie*, a small fold or pound.
- THE CASTLE OF MASTIK or MESTAG. A detached stack N.W. of Mell Head. On the top are the ruins of what is said to have been the residence of a pirate. There was once a draw-bridge between the stack and the adjoining cliff. Probably called 'Mey Stack,' as it stands across the Firth from Mey. (A.). O.N. *Má-stakkr, sea-mews' stack.
- MELL HEAD. A round lumpy promontary. O.N. *Múla-hqfði, ness head.
- LANGATON POINT. A long point at the north, nearest the Swelchie. Usually called Langa-tan. O.N. *Langi-tangi, long point, with *Point* as a *tautology*.
- THE GLOUP. O.N. *Gloppan, the gloup.
- BARNEY'S GEO. O.N. *Bjarna-gjá, the geo of Bjarni.
- SCARFSKERRY. O.N. *Skarfa-skær.
- RED HEAD. O.N. *Rauði-hqfði. G. Ceann Dearg, red head. (*Proceeds*. S.A. Scot., 1908, p. 88).
- DUTHIE GEO. G. *Dubh-gheòdh, black geo.
- BUTTON GEO. O.N. *Botn-gjá, from *botn*, head of a bay, etc.
- BROAD GEO. O.N. *Breiða-gjá.
- MILL GEO. O.N. *Mylnu-gjá.
- FALLA GEO. O.N. *Fella-gjá, geo of the fell.
- LAMIECLETT. A long point with a deep geo at one side and the other side sloping down to the sea. Exposed to the continuous beating of the west sea. O.N. *Lamba-klett, klett of Lambi. ? O.N. *Hlamma-klett, noisy clett, from *hlamm* = glam, m. noise (Fritzner).
- GEIRIECLETT. O.N. *Geira-klett, klett of the gore.
- SCAR CRAGGAN. ? Gaelic, *Sgor, or Sgòr Creagan, notched crags. The Rev. D. Beaton points out

that *sgòr* sometimes means a tail of a bank in the sea, a concealed rock jutting into the sea.

SANDY GEO. O.N. *Sand-gjá.

RED GEO. O.N. *Rauða-gjá.

HORSE GEO. O.N. *Hrossa-gjá.

UPPERTON. O.N. *Øfra-tún, English *upper* substituted for *øfra*.

GEO OF BAGWA. A little geo with sloping bank. O.N. *Bakka-vágr, bank bay, with 'geo of' as a tautology. In some Shetland and Norwegian place-names *kk* > *g*.

SGEIR GUT. O.N. *Sker-gat, or -gøt, skerry hole or holes. Or Gaelic *Sgeir-ghòt, skerry hole, or hole of the skerry. O.N. *gat*, a hole, has been borrowed into Gaelic as *gòt*, in place-names in Tarbat.

MOW SKERRY. O.N. *Mjó-sker, narrow skerry, or *Má-sker, sea-mews' skerry.

FULLIGEO. See *Fulligeo* in Mey.

FINNIES HAVEN. An old landing-place facing Orkney. Near by are the remains of early settlement and burial place. O.N. *Finns-höfn, Finn's haven. The modern *haven* is suggestive of an addition to an old name, such as *Finn-nes, ness of the Finns, probably associated with the adjoining earth-works.

SGEIR BHAN. Gaelic, white skerry.

HAMMER. A sharp projecting rock. O.N. *Hamarr.

SAVIN SKERRIES. Seven skerries. O.N. *Sjau-sker.

TARRY BERRY. A rock covered with sea-weed, with deep waters around, used as a fishing rock. O.N. *Þara-berg.

CLETTOG. A rock surrounded by the sea at high tide. O.N. *Klett, and G. diminutive *ag*. Or G. *Cleitag, small clett; a mas. noun with a fem. termination, which occurs in old names, e.g. *Lìanaig*, in Urquhart. (Watson, pp. xxxvi., 117).

GEO OF FLENDIE CLETT. A landing-place for boats. The stack is of thin slatey formation. Cf. Norse *flindra*, a splinter of stone, a flinder.

GEO OF GOUGAN. A long geo with water in it and full of foam in stormy weather. In summer it is a mooring place for boats. Perhaps the white foam, or other feature, suggested G. *Geòdh a' Ghogain, geo of the milk-pail, or 'nan gogain,' of the milk-pails.

CORBIE TUAG. O.N. *Korpa-þúfa, ravens' mound; þúfa > tua with G. diminutive -ag added.

THE KIRK OF STARA, and THE KIRK OF OLD SGOIL. Mentioned in Macfarlane's *Geographica! Collections*, cannot now be identified.

APPENDIX.

The following names should be added between Robbie's Haven and The Eastin, p. 23:—

THE DALE. A small inlet sloping in from the Ness or point of Duncansby.

HEPPERS. A name, appearing on Abraham Ortelius' Map of 1570, designating a tideway in the Pentland Firth to the east of Stroma. Speed's Map of 1610 has, The Hoppers.

THE SWELL. On Ortelius' Map of 1570. Probably the Swelkie of Stroma. Speed's Map of 1610 also gives, The Swell.

HELL EBB. In Alex. Bryce's Map of 1744, three names appear to the east of Stroma, viz.: The Swilkie, Hell Ebb, and The Boar. O.N. *Hel-fjara, death ebb.

THE BORE OF DUNCANSBY. A line of breakers which at flood-tide extends from the Ness of Duncansby to the east end of the eddy of Stroma. Also Lellan's Bore between Stroma and the Mainland. The Bover, Ortelius' Map, 1570. O.N. *Bára, a wave, billow.

HONORARY DISTRICT SECRETARIES.

- Argyllshire:—Rev. D. BEATON, Oban.
 Denmark:—H. A. KJÆR, M.A., Copenhagen.
 Glamorganshire:—A. G. MOFFAT, Swansea.
 Glasgow:—J. T. SMITH LEASK, 55, West Regent Street, C.2.
 JOHN MOWAT, F.S.A.Scot., 24, Dunearn Street, C.4.
 Iceland:—JÓN STEFÁNSSON, Ph.D., *Hon. Vice-President*.
 SNÆBJÖRN JÓNSSON, The English Bookshop, Reykjavík.
 Isle of Man:—P. M. C. KERMODE, F.S.A.Scot.
 Lake District:—W. G. COLLINGWOOD, M.A., F.S.A.
 Norway:—Bergen—Dr. HAAKON SHETELIG, *Hon. Life Member*.
 Oslo—Dr. A. W. BRØGGER.
 Orkney:—WM. TRAILL, C.E., F.S.A.Scot., Holland, Papa Westray.
 Shetland:—Battasound—Mrs. JESSIE M. E. SAXBY, *Hon. Vice-President*.
 Bressay—N. O. M. CAMERON, of Garth, *Hon. Vice-President*.
 Lerwick—W. W. RATTER.
 Sutherland, Ross and Cromarty:—Rev. DONALD MUNRO, Ferintosh.
 Sweden:—Professor Dr. BIRGER NERMAN, Stockholm.
 Yorkshire:—East Riding—W. BARNES STEVENI, M.J.I., Bridlington.
 North and West Ridings—Dr. A. H. SMITH, University
 College, London, W.C.I.

ORKNEY PLACE NAME COMMITTEE.

Hon. Secretary: WM. TRAILL, C.E., F.S.A.Scot., Holland, Papa Westray.

SHETLAND PLACE-NAME COMMITTEE.

Hon. Secretary: N. O. M. CAMERON, of Garth, Bressay.

VIKING SOCIETY OLD-LORE REPRINTS.

- Orkney and Shetland Folk, 872-1350. By A. W. Johnston. 7d. net.
 Early Christian Monuments of Caithness. Illustrated. By Rev. D. Beaton. 2s. net.
 The Rev. John Morison, D.D., Minister of Canisby, Caithness, 1780-1798. By the Rev. D. Beaton. Portrait and Illustrations of Church. 6d. net.
 List of Caithness and Sutherland Books. By John Mowat. 47 pp. Paper covers. Post free for 1/6. Only 200 copies printed.
 The Rev. Alexander Pope, Reay, Caithness. By the Rev. D. Beaton. Illustrated. 26 pp. 6d. net.
 Grotta-songr. Edited and translated, with Introduction and Notes. By Eiríkr Magnússon, M.A. 1/6 net.
 Darraðaljoð (The Fatal Sisters). Revised Edition of text, translation and Notes by Eiríkr Magnússon, M.A. 1/6 net.
 The Sword Dance, Papa Stour, and Four Shetland Airs. By A. W. Johnston. 7d.
 Tour through the North Isles and Part of the Mainland of Orkney in the Year 1778. By Rev. George Low. Edited by Gilbert Goudie, 1915. 1/- net.

